

A

PLAN

FOR

PREVENTING THE FATAL EFFECTS

FROM THE

BITE OF A MAD DOG,

WITH CASES:

BY

JESSE FOOT,

SURGEON.

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IT is, generally speaking, his duty who appeals to the public, to satisfy first their understanding. He, who now aspires to it, would never have presumed to address the public, or attempted to have engaged their attention, if he did not, from conviction of the rectitude of his plan, hope that they would not only see the necessity, but applaud the motive of it.

The fatal consequences arising from the Bites of Mad Dogs are too familiarly known, to need any horrid excitement, by a recital of them. The object of the present Plan is, that by prevention they may be heard of no more, or at least as seldom as possible.

The Author of this Plan does not intend to enter minutely into the question. He refers those who want an explanation at large upon the subject to a Pamphlet published by him, entitled *An Essay on the Bite of a Mad Dog*, written in the year 1788, and sold by Mr. Becket, Pall-Mall.

But he cannot, consistent with his Plan, withhold from the public the following Truths, namely,

1st, That every medicine that ever was given, for the Prevention of Hydrophobia from the Bite of a Mad Dog, has failed.

2dly, That although many who have taken medicine as a prophylactic, have escaped from being infected; yet it ought not to be attributed to the power of the medicine; because many who have thus confided in medicine have, notwithstanding, died of Hydrophobia.

3dly, That of many who are bitten, few are actually infected; owing to the Bite being made through cloathing, and that they have escaped by the infecting fluid of the Dog being wiped away

away by the teeth passing through the cloathing, or by some other fortunate circumstance.

4thly, That as some medicine or other is indiscriminately given to every one who is bitten, so every one who is not actually infected by the Bite does well—as every one who is actually infected by the Bite, dies : and as there are few instances of the latter, in comparison to the former, thus it is, that the reputation of a Cure by Prophylactic or preventive medicines has been supported—when, in fact, the safety or the danger of the patient has been dependant upon another circumstance, which is, whether he was in consequence of the Bite actually infected or not.

5thly, That if the patient was not infected, he would do well, whether he took any medicine or not ; but if he was infected, he would die, whether he took any medicine or not.

6thly, That no one ever recovered, who had the positive symptoms of Hydrophobia in consequence of the Bite of a Mad Dog.

7thly, That excision by a knife of the bitten part, is the only sure and certain method of

prevention ; and that the sooner it be done after the Bite, the better : but that the practice should not be renounced even after the expiration of sixty hours, or a much longer time. It must be observed, that one does not want to know the utmost extent of time that will be dangerous to wait for ; but one is anxious that the operation should take place as soon as possible after the accident.

8thly, That the subjoined Cases are useful in explaining the seventh article.

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The two first Cases are given more at length in the Pamphlet written by me, and referred to already.

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## CASE I.

Elizabeth Pratt was bitten on Friday the 25th of January, 1785, in the forenoon, by a large Newfoundland Dog, in a confirmed state of Madness. The Bite was on the naked arm, which

which drew blood. The bitten part was taken out on the Saturday following, about six o'clock in the evening. The part taken out was of the size of a silver crown piece. The woman did well. The distance of time from the Bite to the Operation was from thirty-two to thirty-five hours.

This is the first instance upon record, where excision of the bitten part by the knife has been solely relied upon. Dr. John Hunter, who was present at the operation performed at Bromley Hill, advised me, before we left town, to provide myself with Caustic for the purpose. I told him, if that was his opinion, it was needless for me to attend, for I had long ago determined in my mind what I would do on such an occasion. To this he submitted. The fatal case of Master Rowley and the French Woman, two months before, through Caustic, under the direction of Mr. John Hunter, contrasted with the success of this and every other Case so treated, has sufficiently justified my determination.

## CASE II.

George Lane, a Groom, was bitten by a Terrier Dog, belonging to the stable, which was in a confirmed state of Madness, on Friday the 10th of June, 1785, at nine o'clock at night; and it was on Monday the 13th, at five o'clock in the afternoon, that the part was taken out. The Bite was on the outer part of the thumb, near the knuckle. The Groom did well. The distance of time from the Bite to the Operation was sixty-eight hours.

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## CASE III.

A young Midshipman was walking and reading in the public road, in the vicinity of London: He was bitten, without any provocation, by a Dog that passed him, seemingly mad, on the outer part of his thumb, in the Spring of 1789. The part was taken out the next day, and he did well. The Bite had drawn blood.

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## CASE IV.

In November, 1789, the Boy of a Poulterer in the Parish of St. Anne, was bitten in the  
hand



hand by a Dog in a confirmed state of Madness, and which was pursued and killed. The Bite had drawn blood. The part was instantly taken out, and the Boy did well.

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### CASE V.

A Lady, in August 1789, was bitten in the heel, through her stocking, by her own Lap-Dog, which died mad. The Bite drew blood. The bitten part was not taken out till three days afterwards. The Lady did well.

None of these patients took medicine, or bathed in the sea.

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### CASE VI.

(Given by Mr. Thomas Loftie, Surgeon, at Canterbury, February 9th, 1791.---Vide MEDICAL FACTS, part 1, 2.)

“ Two years ago a poor Man was brought to him, bitten in both the leg and arm, the day before, by a Dog that died mad. The wounds were small; that on the arm was about two inches above the wrist, and only one of the Dog’s teeth had penetrated; the other on the tibia was  
more

more considerable ; here were marks of the teeth. Twenty hours after the accident the parts were dissected out, and the patient continues well ever since. The wounds were dressed with lint dipt in solution of sublimate."

Another Case has since come under the above Gentleman's care, which he treated in a similar manner, and with equal success : but in this the certainty of the animal being mad was not so clear.

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## CASE VII.

(Communicated to me by Mr. Jackson, 1789.)

"Sixteen months ago a strange Dog came into the yard of Robert Jackson, Esq. near Tewksbury, in Gloucestershire, and bit two Dogs : they were both bathed in the sea, and to both the Ormskirk medicine was given. They both died mad ; but one of them, having got loose during his madness, bit a Puppy that he had formerly been very fond of : the bitten part of the Puppy was cut out directly, and the Puppy continued well."

## CASES VIII. IX.

(Communicated to me by Mr. John Capon Weeks,  
Surgeon at Rochester, dated March, 1791.)

“ George Cobb, a servant of Commodore Pasley, was bit by a Dog on the 29th of November, 1789. I saw him immediately after the Bite. The Bite was on the right cheek, and the inside of the upper lip ; but I could not persuade him to have the parts that were bitten extirpated. The Ormskirk medicine was made use of, and the Birling medicine was also given: the Lad continued very well for ten days after the Bite, and the wounds healed ; but on the 10th of December symptoms of Hydrophobia appeared. The Birling medicine was now again administered ; but by two o’clock of the morning of the 12th of December, the patient appeared quite exhausted by the violence of the symptoms, became quiet, and died in about half an hour after.

“ Richard Braham was bit by the same Dog, in about a quarter of an hour after the Bite of the unfortunate George Cobb. I saw this Lad about an hour after he was bitten. The parts bitten were the upper lip, the under part of the lower  
jaw,

jaw, and the little finger of the right hand, all of which bled in consequence of the Bites. The bitten parts were all extirpated. The wounds were dressed with a Mercurial Digestive, and healed in about sixteen days. This patient has experienced no ill effects from the Bites, and is now in good Health."

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### *EXTRACTS OF VARIOUS CASES,*

BY DR. WHITE OF ST. EDMUND'S BURY, JUNE 4, 1792.

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"Seven miserable objects were bitten by Dogs quite unprovoked, and with every appearance of Madness. Three did not apply till the third day, two on the second, and two in a few days after the accident.

"Three others also applied to the Doctor for advice, who were bitten by a Cow that had the Hydrophobia. All of these, except two, had the injured parts wholly dissected out, the wounds well washed first with cold water, and the surfaces touched with Lunar Caustic,—  
 "And," says the Doctor, "I am in hopes,  
 from

from the interval which has elapsed, that they are freed from danger.

“ One of the excepted two, was bitten about eight months ago in the palm, and on the back of the hand; in which case, as much of the wounded part as could be with safety was removed, and the process of ablution was continued for near two hours; nothing having been done externally until the day I was consulted, which was the third from the accident. This person is in perfect health and spirits. In the other instance, the tooth of the Cow had penetrated the end of the finger through the nail, on which account I thought myself warranted to deprive the patient of the first joint.

“ It is now five months or more since I was consulted about a Foal which had been bitten by a Mad Dog five days before, through the wing of the left nostril. The wounded part was much torn. I ordered it to be cut out, and no other means were used. The animal is at this time perfectly well. A valuable Horse, a Cow, and two Pigs, were bitten by the same Dog, on the same day, to which internal remedies only had been administered. They all died within the month.”

Similar

Similar collateral circumstances were also proofs of the dogs being mad, in five out of the seven instances before mentioned, on which external means only were employed.

Two persons, on whom excision and ablu-tion had not been performed, and to whom medicines of false repute had been given, fell victims to their credulity.

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9thly, That it does not appear to the Author's conviction, that the public at large are in possession of these interesting facts, notwithstanding he has been at unwearied pains, and at some expence, to inculcate them. As he not only has the mortification of seeing the daily newspapers full of melancholy instances of victims to the Hydrophobia, but what is yet more to be regretted, he sees the public hope falsely and ignorantly buoyed up by repeated offers of new charms and reputed nostrums.

10thly, That he cannot think he has discharged fully his duty, after having avowed this certain method of prevention, until it be propogated, and until the practice of it become as general as possible : and cannot but lament, that he, as an individual, is neither equal by influence or  
fortune,



fortune, alone to carry what his reason boldly justifies into effect.

11thly, That he earnestly recommends to gentlemen, both private and medical, to circulate these facts wherever they can, and to transmit to him such clear cases as come within their knowledge.

12thly, That as every one who reflects must know, that first impressions are difficult to be removed, and that prejudices must be first rooted out of the mind, before it can be in a preparation for receiving any new truth, so must this be from that cause the more strongly inculcated.

Lastly, That collecting cases, from time to time, and sending them forth altogether to the public, will tend to confirm the truth, and encourage the doubtful in submitting to a plan which, if judiciously observed, cannot fail of preserving those lives which otherwise would be yet sacrificed to dark superstition and obstinate ignorance. It is every man's concern, as every one is liable; and it is a truth that every man should know, for his self-defence.

Dean Street, Soho, April 5, 1793.

